

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 76
By Brooks

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Mr. Elmer Marshall of
Memphis.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the death of Mr. Elmer Marshall; and

WHEREAS, Elmer Marshall or "Mel," as he was known to his friends and patrons, was an outstanding person and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Marshall served with acumen and alacrity as a leader in his community; he was the owner and operator of Mel's Fish Market, where he was renowned for serving delicious, down-home fried fish dinners; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Marshall will be fondly remembered as a man who faced many trials and tribulations, but who overcame such adversities and excelled; he did not possess a formal education, but his zeal and his great desire to press forward in order to make his dream come true, made Mel's Fish Market a success; and

WHEREAS, in 1979, after retiring from Hunt-Wesson, Mel Marshall had the desire and foresight to open his own fish market; with the help of Mr. Ellis Ingram, who taught Mel how to

operate such a business, Mel's vision became a reality when he opened his market at the corner of Walker and Bellevue Streets in Memphis; and

WHEREAS, people soon came from both far and near to sample Mel's southern delicacies; and

WHEREAS, as his business prospered it soon required a larger location, so two years after opening the doors to Mel's Fish Market, Mr. Marshall moved to his new location at Lamar and McClain; here, he once again excelled with his family business, as his wife and their three sons all lent their own talents to helping Mel's dream continue as a successful reality; and

WHEREAS, it was at the Lamar/McClain location where Mrs. Mel (as Shirley was called) started a Black History Wall of Fame, where pictures of Memphis' most prominent citizens were hung; Mel's patrons enjoyed this little history lesson as they waited for their delicious fish dinners to be served. Mel, Mrs. Mel, and the boys stayed at this location for fifteen years until it was time to look for an even larger facility at which to serve their delectable food; and

WHEREAS, their final move was to 1796 Lamar Avenue where Mel's Fish Market still stands today; as Mr. Marshall's health began to fail, he slowly began turning over the business to his wife and sons until his untimely death on Saturday, November 2, 1996; since that time Mel's Fish Market has continued to thrive as a tribute to Mel's expert tutelage of his sons in carrying on the operation of the family business; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Marshall was an active and devout member of the Lane Avenue Full Gospel Church, which he served faithfully for many years; he was as proud of his church family and pastor, Bishop A.R. Williams, as he was of his own family; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Marshall was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, he enjoyed the loving companionship of his devoted wife, Shirley, and was the proud father of three sons, Elmer, Jr., Joe, and Cortez; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Marshall leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional citizen and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, That we honor the memory of Mr. Elmer "Mel" Marshall, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character, his indelible legacy as an astute, yet compassionate, businessman, and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Mr. Mel Marshall.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.